



Press release

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Chemical Materials Agency (Provisional)

Public Outreach and Information Office

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ALARM SOUNDS AT ABCDF

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md. – Workers at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility, which is located at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., masked and evacuated the Neutralization Building on Sunday evening after an alarm alerted of the possible presence of mustard agent vapor.

Two hazardous material technicians were in the process of securing the inner bag of a 55-gallon hazardous waste drum in the airlock of the Neutralization Building when the agent alarms sounded. The drum contained waste material accumulated during ton container draining. Monitors detected agent vapor coming from the area of the drum.

The workers immediately masked and evacuated the facility in accordance with safety response and evacuation procedures. As a precautionary measure, both were taken to the on-site medical facility, where they were monitored and medically evaluated. Both workers were cleared and returned to their duties later during the shift. Work resumed in the area once it was determined that the area was safe and the cause of the incident was understood.

The building's monitoring system indicated the presence of low levels of agent vapor in an airlock and around two agent drain stations, where the hazardous waste drum was located. These areas are located within the neutralization facility and under ventilation confinement. The monitors detected no agent vapor after the second measurement (approximately five minutes). Agent was not released to the outside atmosphere and at no time was there a threat to the on or off-post community or the environment.

In keeping with its commitment to ensuring the safety of its workers, the community and the environment, the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility team is reviewing its hazardous waste management procedures to reduce the likelihood of such readings in the future.

Since disposal operations began at the facility on April 23, more than 3,900 gallons of mustard agent have been neutralized.